

I oppose loosening the rules designed to promote and protect diversity of media ownership. These rules were adopted to ensure that the public would receive a diverse range of viewpoints from the media, and not simply the opinions of a handful of media conglomerates.

I feel that if these rules are scrapped, big media's gain will be the public's loss.

For example, without the newspaper/broadcast cross-ownership ban, many of us will find their only local daily paper has been bought by one of the TV networks. It's not hard to imagine the drop in already substandard news quality if newspapers are absorbed by the broadcast TV industry. This is NOT a good thing. I urge you not to loosen these rules.

I feel that chain ownership of newspapers, television and radio stations would likely increase dramatically, with all-too-familiar consequences: layoffs as formerly independent news divisions merge, less original content and even further cuts in local affairs coverage.

Commercial broadcasting has gone through stunning negative changes in recent years, as deregulation and consolidation have shifted the balance of power to a small handful of companies with interests and investments spread across the media landscape. We now live in a world dominated by profit-driven media conglomerates more interested in delivering viewers to advertisers than in serving the needs of the public. This EQUALS greed and in my book that is not the business of public interest.

Dissenting political viewpoints are routinely marginalized in national mainstream media, and the interests and perspectives of women, people of color, labor, and lesbians, gays and bisexuals are consistently underrepresented. Across the country, broadcast public affairs programs that address local concerns are almost non-existent; many communities can't even expect any coverage of their local elections on TV.

Independent, critical and genuinely representative media are crucial to a healthy democracy; without them, citizens lose the means to control and participate in the public debate that sets the nation's political agenda. Sadly, this is already happening: In the absence of an effective regulatory agency, corporate control of the media is damaging our democracy.

This country's airwaves BELONG TO THE AMERICAN PEOPLE. THAT MEANS JOHN Q. PUBLIC!!! It belongs to the American people, and the FCC is supposed to manage them in the public interest. Unfortunately, the current FCC leadership seems hostile to this very concept. Asked to explain his understanding of the public interest, Chairman Powell once replied that he had "no idea" what it meant. Well perhaps a dictionary definition is in order. From the American Heritage dictionary: "1. The well-being of the general public; the commonweal. 2. The attention of the people with respect to events.

That's why it's so important that the FCC put the brakes on its hasty review and encourage a real debate-- one that engages the public and public advocacy groups, not just industry "experts." It appears to me that many of these experts are "hired guns" who say whatever the person paying them tells them to say. Please act in the PUBLIC INTEREST.

